DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 185 580 CS 205 498

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TITLE Pattern Guides: An Alternative for Content Teachers.
PUB DATE 80
NOTE 16p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southwest Regional Conference of the International Reading Association (8th, Albuquerque, NM, January 31-February 2, 1980).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Advance Organizers; *Content Area Reading; *Discourse Analysis; Expository Writing; Reading Assignments; Reading Instruction; Secondary Education; *Study Guides; Study Skills

ABSTRACT

This paper describes the composition of one particular kind of study guide called a pattern guide that can be used by content area teachers to aid their students in reading and understanding their textbooks. The purpose of the guide is stated as highlighting the reading and thinking skills to be used as well as the most important concepts to be learned. Six steps are described for the preparation of a pattern guide: (1) identify the important concepts in a chapter; (2) read carefully and note the portions of material that correspond to the previously determined concepts; (3) identify the organizational pattern used by the author, e.g. compare/contrast, time order, cause/effect, or simple listing; (4) note signal words in the four relationship categories that help to identify the patterns; (5) integrate the essential concepts, the author's writing pattern, and the reading/thinking process the student will use--for example, the causes of the Civil War might be the essential idea to be learned, cause/effect may be the writer's organizational pattern, and determining causal relationships would be the student's reading thinking process; and (6) decide how much help over the entire chapter is needed by the students. Suggestions for several pattern guide formats are presented and analyzed. (MKM)

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Pattern Guides: An Alternative for Content Teachers

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Based on a presentation made at the Eighth Southwest Regional Conference of the International Reading Association by Mary W. Olson and Bonnie L. Longnion, Albuquerque, New Mexico, Feb. 1, 1980.

CS205497

Pattern Guides: An Alternative for Content Teachers

For a majority of secondary teachers in content areas, the textbook is the one common instructional aid which is extensively, and sometimes exclusively, used. The textbook serves two purposes: it provides structure for the cou[illegible]nd it supplies the same material for each student.

In spite of these positive features, most content teachers are justifiably concerned with students' poor comprehension of expository material. Teachers are very much aware of the shortcomings of their most used tool. Textbooks must serve students with broad, diverse reading abilities. Because the textbook is written at a particular readability level, it is too complex for many poor readers. Additionally, when the concept load is considered, it is apparent that even able readers often have difficulty. Thus for students having diverse reading skills, material with a single readability level and a heavy concept load produce such a mismatch that effective instruction is a formidable task.

Therefore the content teacher has great need for specific and direct help so that her students can master the necessary concepts in the subject. One effective strategy to increase student understanding of the text is by providing a study guide.

The study guide is created by the teacher and serves three purposes. First, assistence is provided for the students with inadequate reading skills. The students' reading and learning needs determine the structure of the guide, thereby enabling teachers to succeed in meeting each student's requirements in an individualized manner.

Second the study guide also can focus the students' attention on the reading/thinking processes needed. These processes must be engaged if comprehension is to occur. Therefore, another purpose of the study guide is to increase student awareness of the reading skills needed to extract information from the passage.

Third, study guides aid students in identifying and locating important concepts. As previously mentioned, the concept load in textbooks is often heavy. Expository material may contain so many examples, illustrations, and other devices that progress for poor readers (and even able readers) is only confounded. A well prepared study guide omits superfluous content and highlights only the essential content.

Study guides, however, may include a variety of features. While every study guide does not contain every aspect, the decision as to what to include rests with the teacher. Possible ingredients include the text title or reference used to write the guide; the purpose of the guide; or perhaps an initial section devoted to vocabulary expansion and concept building. Some guides ask prereading questions; others ask post questions. The length of the guide may vary: it may be quite extensive or very brief. Independent or group activities may constitute a portion of the guide. The type of study guide determines many of the features.

Realizing that study guides may take different forms, this article describes the composition of one particular kind of study guide. Brunner and Campbell (1978) declare the guide in question to be

> . . . a teacher generated paper-and-pencil simulator that helps students become active and purposeful readers by focusing their attention on the reading/thinking skills being employed and on the content concepts being presented. (p. 154)

The guide highlights the reading/thinking skills to be used as well as the most important concepts to be learned. Herber (1978) has labeled this kind of study guide a pattern guide. In order to meet the criteria for a pattern guide, attention is given to the author's organizational structure. The remainder of this article delineates the steps the teacher must follow in order to create a pattern guide as well as examines the organization and format of several pattern guides.

Procedure

The teacher begins the procedure to write a pattern guide, remembering the goal of increasing comprehension for both good and poor readers. First, it is necessary to identify the essential concepts to be taught. Clearly all the details in a subject do not receive equal attention. The teacher is the expert and decides what the students really need to learn. For the most part, effective teachers present a few concepts thoroughly instead of many concepts lightly.

After the important concepts have been identified, the teacher then begins the second step which is to read carefully the appropriate section of the text. He/she outlines, takes notes, and/or

underlines the portions of the material which correspond to the previously determined concepts. Obviously the teacher needs to be certain the concepts regarded as essential are actually in the text. Furthermore, he/she must note the precise location of each concept in order to create the pattern guide.

The third step involves the identification of the organizational pattern used by the author. When Niles (1965) analyzed a sample of secondary textbooks, she found comparison/contrast, time order, cause/effect, and simple listing were the prevailing organizational schemes. The relationships within the subject matter determines the author's specific pattern. Within each section or chapter, however, some or all of the patterns may be evident.

In order to decide the author's organizational structure, students and teachers need to be aware of the relationships reflected by particular structure words. For example, some words signal a cause/effect writing pattern, such as consequently, as a result, and therefore; whereas, besides, moreover, also, or another signal a simple listing pattern. Figure 1 suggests some structure words which serve to alert the teacher and help him/her determine the organizational pattern.

The teacher has now designated the concepts the students are to learn; located them in the textbook; and determined the author's writing pattern to the corresponding reading/thinking process. For instance, a time order writing pattern demands a reading/thinking process which is compatable with sequencing events. The student who is aware of this pattern notices the order of events in the

passage. This awareness helps the student understand the material.

The fifth step is the process of integrating the essential concepts, the author's writing pattern, and the reading/thinking process the student will use. For example, Admiral Byrd's expedition to the North Pole compared to the Lewis and Clark expedition might contain the important history concepts; a contrast/compare form may be the author's writing pattern; and contrasting and comparing aspects would be the reading/thinking process employed by the student. Or perhaps the causes of the Civil War might be the essential ideas to be learned; cause/effect may be the writer's organizational pattern; and determining causal relationships would be the students' reading/thinking process.

The final step requires the teacher to decide how much help and direction to give the students. Some students may only require the section of the text identified; other students may need specific page numbers. Poor readers obligate the teacher to supply page and paragraph number and sometimes even the line number. The teacher's goal is to increase the student's comprehension of the textbook. To accomplish this, he/she provides as much specific detailed assistence as the student needs.

Having moved through the six preliminary steps, the teacher is now ready to compose the pattern guide. In particular, Brunner and Campbell (1978) offer advice on designing the guide: provide for content and process; have clear and concise directions; do not overcrowd the guide; and challenge the students. With these suggestions in mind, several pattern guides will be examined.

Formats

A format for the cause/effect writing pattern is shown in Figure 2. The reading/thinking process is identified at the upper left of the guide, and again in the directions, thereby alerting the students to causal relationships in the textbook. The paragraph numbers as well as page numbers are given. Figure 3 depicts another format suitable for a cause/effect pattern guide. The student must understand the nature of the link between events to complete this guide, which only offers page numbers for the students.

Figures 4 and 5 portray guides for the contrast/compare and the listing pattern. The format in Figure 4 reflects the comparisons of the relationships in the history text. The hint is included to keep students on the right track. On the other hand, Figure 5 gives even more help. The first three answers are already completed. This assistence encourages the tentative student and models appropriate responses.

Remembering that the guide's format will vary according to the author's organizational pattern and the resulting reading/thinking process, Figures 6 and 7 suggest two models for sequencing events from a textbook. Fighre 6 uses a time line, exact time frames, and page numbers to provide more assistence for the students than Figure 7. By contrast, Figure 7 fails to provide dates or specific pages; although it does require events to be sequenced. Figure 7 needs a more able reader than Figure 6.

Realizing that generating any study guide is time consuming, Tutolo (1977) recommends that teachers reuse them each year as the need arises. He also states that the sections of the text which contain the difficult and important concepts are likely candidates for study guides. Thus the time and effort invested by the teacher would pay dividends repeatedly.

This paper has focused on one kind of study guide, the pattern guide. The teacher perceives the author's writing pattern and the related reading/thinking process in order to assist the students' acquisition of the important content concepts. Good and poor readers alike benefit from this guidance in which the textbook is adapted to accommodate a variety of reading levels. Whether a teacher uses study guides often or rarely, or creates extensive or meager guides, they are an excellent instructional tactic, assisting all students to master the essential concepts of the textbook.

FIGURE 1

STRUCTURE WORDS

Paragraph Pattern	Structure Words
simple listing	for example, for instance, specifically, another, besides, also, in addition, moreover, furthermore
cause/effect	consequently, therefore, thus, as a result, however, hence
contrast/compare	on the other hand, but, by contrast, yet, in particular
time order	another, additionally, next, first, second, etc., then, and, furthermore, also

FIGURE 2

Chapter 12 -"Kinetic Theory"

CAUSE/EFFECT

The kinetic theory explains the effects of heat and pressure on matter. Several ramifications of the theory are discussed in this chapter. Be alert to causal relationships as you read.

1. Gas exerts pressure on its container because

   A. p. 261, par. 1

   B. p. 261, par. 1

2. What causes pressure to be exerted in each arm of the manometer?

   A. p. 261 - 262

   B. _____

3. The effects of colliding molecules which have unequal kinetic energy is p. 266

4. What causes the particles of a liquid to assume the shape of the cont iner?

   p. 269, par. 1

Pattern guide created from: Chemistry, A Modern Course (Chapter 12) by Robert C. Smoot and Jack Price, 1975.

FIGURE 3

"Organizing the Forces of Labor"- Chapter 20

CAUSE/EFFECT

In this section, look for cause-effect relationships in the situations mentioned below. Add the cause or effect in the proper column.

Cause	Effect
1.	1. saving money was difficult or impossible for unskilled labor (p. 400).
2. owners felt it was necessary to keep labor costs as low as possible (p.400)	2.
3.	3. only the boldest workers dared to defy management and join a labor organization (p. 400).
4. by 1800's wages of unskilled workers exceeded skilled artisans (p. 401).	4.
5.	5. the workingmen's parties supported Jackson after 1828 (p. 402-3).

Pattern guide created from: The Adventures of the American People by Henry Craft and John Krout, 1970.

FIGURE 4

"The United States Divided"- Chapter 14

CONTRAST/COMPARE

Using pages 264-265, you will CONTRAST AND COMPARE the repercussions in the South and the North to the Supreme Court's decision in the Dred Scott case.

the South	the North
1. (Hint: newspapers)	1.
2. (Hint: Democratic Party)	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.

Pattern guide created from: The Adventures of the American People by Henry Craft and John Krout, 1970.

FIGURE 5

"Sleep, Fatigue, and Rest" - Chapter 4

This section of your textbook lists many causes of fatigue. (p. 96-97) Some of the causes are physical and some are mental. Fill in the causes under the appropriate heading.

I. Physical causes of fatigue

A. short burst of intense effort

B. rapid growth

C. lack of important food

D. pg. 96, par. 3

E.

F.

G.

II. Mental causes of fatigue

A. pg. 96, par. 1

B.

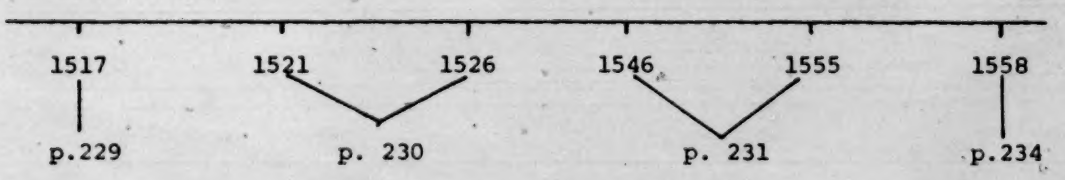
Pattern guide created from: Investigating Your Health by Benjamin F. Miller, M.D., Edward B. Rosenberg, Benjamin L. Stackowski.

FIGURE 6

"Religious Change in Western Europe"

Unit 4, Chapter 3

A time line is an excellent way to see the sequence of events. As you read about the religious leaders (pp. 229 - 236), fill in the events on the time line below. Write what happened under the date.



Pattern guide created from: People and Our World: A Study of World History by Allan Kownslar, 1977.

FIGURE 7

"A Time of Conflict"

Unit 4, Chapter 4

TIME ORDER

Religious factions caused by the Reformation triggered a number of religious wars in the 1500's and 1700's. Rewrite the events below in the order they occured. Place the date of each event beside it. (pp. 237-248)

1. The son of King Charles I was called back to England for the return of the monarchy.	1.
2. The Thirty Years War involved almost all major European countries.	2.
3. Most people in the northern half of the Spanish Netherlands became Protestant.	3.
4. In England, conflict between the king and Parliament led to Civil War.	4.
5. Sweden revolted against the Catholic king of Denmark and declared its independence.	5.
6. The Act of Succession was agreed to by William and Mary.	6.

Pattern guide created from: People and Our World: A Study of World History by Allan Kownslar, 1977.

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